

**DEPOT MAINTENANCE SYMPOSIUM
SENIOR LOGISTICIANS PANEL
SCRIPT FOR MAJ GEN ZETTLER**

I WOULD LIKE TO ENTER THESE DISCUSSIONS BY SHARING THREE POINTS WITH YOU FROM MY PERSPECTIVE AS THE AIR FORCE DIRECTOR OF MAINTENANCE:

- THE CRITICALITY OF MODERNIZING INFORMATION SYSTEMS TO ACCOMPLISH OUR 21ST CENTURY MISSION RESPONSIBILITIES
- PROVIDING THE LOWEST COST DEPOT MAINTENANCE TO OUR FORCES
- FACTORS WE SHOULD CONTEMPLATE IN OUTSOURCING UNIT LEVEL MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS

FIRST, **MODERNIZING INFORMATION SYSTEMS.**

THE FY 1996-2001, DEFENSE PLANNING GUIDANCE STATED:

“IN ORDER TO SUPPORT INCREASING FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INFORMATION WHILE IMPLEMENTING OVERALL REDUCTIONS IN THE BUDGET, THE DEPARTMENT MUST ACCELERATE THE PACE AT WHICH IT SELECTS AND DEPLOYS MIGRATION SYSTEMS, IDENTIFIES STANDARD DATA, AND CONDUCTS BUSINESS PROCESS REENGINEERING ACROSS ALL FUNCTIONS.”

IN THE MAINTENANCE ARENA, THE AIR FORCE HAS TAKEN ON THIS CHALLENGE THROUGH DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTEGRATED MAINTENANCE DATA SYSTEM, OR IMDS. IMDS IS AN EVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM THAT WILL PROVIDE THE AIR FORCE WITH A SINGLE MAINTENANCE INFORMATION SYSTEM, REPLACING OR INTEGRATING ALL--AND MY VISION IS

ALL--EXISTING MAINTENANCE INFORMATION SYSTEMS--FROM THE FLIGHTLINE THROUGH THE DEPOTS. IMDS WILL NOT ONLY ALLOW US TO ELIMINATE THE NUMEROUS LEGACY SYSTEMS, BUT WILL ALSO PROVIDE THE TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT TO REENGINEER THE WAY WE DO BUSINESS, SUCH AS: CREATING A PAPERLESS ENVIRONMENT AND ELIMINATING THE NUMEROUS FORMS CURRENTLY REQUIRED; AUTOMATICALLY COLLECTING DATA, THUS ALLOWING THE MAINTAINER TO BETTER PROVIDE SUPPORT TO OUR COMBAT FORCES; ALLOW DATA ENTRY AT THE POINT OF MAINTENANCE, THEREFORE, INCREASING DATA ACCURACY AND PREVENTING REDUNDANT DATA ENTRY; AND AUTOMATICALLY SCHEDULING INSPECTIONS, TCTOs, TIME CHANGE ITEMS, ETC.

IMDS HAS ALSO BEEN IDENTIFIED AS ONE OF OUR LOGISTICS INFORMATION SYSTEMS THAT WILL FIT UNDER THE GLOBAL COMBAT SUPPORT SYSTEM UMBRELLA; THUS LEADING TO AN INTEGRATED LOGISTICS SYSTEM RATHER THAN JUST ANOTHER STOVE-PIPED MAINTENANCE SYSTEM. AS IMDS IS BEING DEVELOPED, WE ARE WORKING WITH THE OTHER LOGISTICS FUNCTIONAL AREAS TO ENSURE THEY CAN ALL SHARE AND EXCHANGE INFORMATION. FOR EXAMPLE, IMDS WILL PROVIDE THE MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN WITH THE CAPABILITY TO ORDER PARTS FROM FLIGHTLINE AND WHILE TRANSPARENT TO THE USER, IMDS WILL BE

INTERFACING WITH THE SUPPLY SYSTEM [EITHER SBSS OR INTEGRATED LOGISTICS SYSTEM-SUPPLY].

WHILE IMDS HAS MADE IMMENSE PROGRESS, THERE ARE STILL NUMEROUS MOUNTAINS AND CHALLENGES THAT WE MUST OVERCOME BEFORE WE CAN DECLARE VICTORY. THE FIRST IS REENGINEERING THE PROCESSES. REENGINEERING AT THE BASE-LEVEL IS SLOWLY UNDERWAY, BUT IT IS A MAJOR CHALLENGE STANDARDIZING THE PROCESSES FROM COMMUNITIES AS DIVERSE AS THE COMBAT AIR FORCES, STRATEGIC AIRLIFT, GUARD AND RESERVE FORCES, AND SO ON. AN EVEN BIGGER CHALLENGE IS TO REENGINEER THE DEPOT MAINTENANCE PROCESSES! THE AIR FORCE HAS NOT YET BEGUN TO GET THEIR ARMS AROUND THIS MASSIVE PROBLEM. OUR DEPOTS HAVE A UNFATHOMABLE NUMBER OF LEGACY INFORMATION SYSTEMS, MANY OF WHICH ARE UNIQUE AND STOVE-PIPED.

DESPITE THESE OBSTACLES, WE ARE COMMITTED TO FIELDING THE INITIAL INCREMENT OF IMDS AT THE END OF FY 00.

WE STILL HAVE MUCH TO ACCOMPLISH--IN FACT WE ARE REALLY ONLY EMBRYONIC--BUT WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS AND WE ARE COMMITTED TO MAKING THIS SYSTEM A SUCCESS--BECAUSE IN OUR CURRENT ENVIRONMENT AND LEVELS OF ACTIVITY, WE CAN'T CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN OUR READINESS WITHOUT TOOLS LIKE IMDS.

TURNING TO THE SECOND AREA OF A **DEPOT STRATEGY**..

MOST ORGANIC DEPOT WORKLOAD IS ASSIGNED BASED ON MISSION, COST CONSIDERATIONS, AND OCCASIONALLY EMOTIONS. HOWEVER, WE RETAIN “CORE” SUSTAINING WORKLOADS TO ENSURE RETENTION OF THOSE ORGANIC CAPABILITIES WE DEEM CRITICAL TO THE CONDUCT OF OUR WARTIME TASKINGS. IN RESPONSE TO INCREASINGLY ROBUST PRIVATE SECTOR MAINTENANCE SOURCES, MORE RELIABLE WEAPON SYSTEMS AND DECREASED FORCE SIZE, WE’VE REDUCED DEPOT CORE REQUIREMENTS BY A FOURTH OVER THE PAST 3 YEARS. IN DETERMINING THE BEST SOURCE FOR NON-CORE REQUIREMENTS, I AM CONVINCED THAT PUBLIC - PRIVATE COMPETITION WORKS. FOR THE TWO MAJOR COMPETITIONS WE’VE COMPLETED THUS FAR, WE’RE PROJECTING AN ANNUAL SAVINGS OF APPROXIMATELY \$800M OVER ~9 YEARS, WHEN COMPARED TO PROJECTED COSTS FOR THE SAME WORKLOAD FOR THE SAME PERIOD. THESE SUCCESSES SUGGEST WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO EMPLOY THESE COMPETITIONS TO WORKLOAD ASSIGNMENTS PAST THE CURRENT ROUND OF DEPOT CLOSURES. WE’VE GONE TO EXTRAORDINARY LENGTHS TO LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD AND HAVE ENFORCED THE RULES IN OUR COMPETITIONS – THERE SHOULD BE NO QUESTION AT THIS POINT AS TO THE INTEGRITY OF THE PROCESS. INDUSTRY NEEDS TO STEP UP TO THIS CHALLENGE AND ENTER COMPETITIONS WHERE THEIR CORE COMPETENCIES AND GOOD BUSINESS PRACTICES WILL YIELD COMPETITIVE BIDS. LIKEWISE, I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THE DEPOTS SHOULD BE FORCED TO RE-ENGINEER THE CORE WORKLOAD PROCESSES TO ACHIEVE THE SAME SAVINGS ACHIEVED IN THE COMPETITIONS. THE WINNER FROM ALL THESE

ACTIVITIES WILL BE NOT ONLY THOSE ENTITIES GAINING THE WORK, BUT THE AMERICAN TAXPAYERS.

FINALLY, I'D JUST LIKE TO SAY A FEW WORDS ON **OUTSOURCING OF FIELD LEVEL MAINTENANCE**..

WE NEED TO CAREFULLY SELECT AND EVALUATE OUR TARGETS FOR OUTSOURCING MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS AT THE WING/UNIT/BASE LEVEL-- EVERYTHING IS NOT UP FOR GRABS! CLEARLY IN OUR PEACETIME GARRISON ROLE, AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE APPEARS TO BE A LUCRATIVE AREA FOR COMPETITIVE SOURCING. HOWEVER--AND IT IS A BIG HOWEVER--WITH THE PULLBACK FROM OVERSEAS BASES AND THE EVOLUTION TO AN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE, A CLEAN LINE OF DEMARCATION NO LONGER EXISTS BETWEEN CRITICAL AND NON-CRITICAL FUNCTIONS. FOREMOST IN OUR MINDS DURING OUTSOURCING DRILLS SHOULD BE THE FACT THAT OUR PEOPLE, WHILE EXTRAORDINARY LOYAL AND DEDICATED TO THE MISSION, HAVE THEIR LIMITS. AS CONUS FUNCTIONS BECOME INCREASINGLY OUTSOURCED, OUR OVERSEAS TASKING FOR THE REMAINING SPECIALISTS RAMPS UP SIGNIFICANTLY. THE RESULT: OUR FINE AIRMAN, SOLDIERS AND SAILORS, WHOM WE'VE SPENT MEGABUCKS TO TRAIN AND WHO PROVIDE THIS COUNTRY ITS WARFIGHTING EDGE, ELECT TO GET OUT. WHY SHOULD THEY STAY? THEY CAN WORK FOR A CONTRACTOR DOING THE SAME JOB, WITH FAR GREATER STABILITY, USUALLY WITH GREATER PAY AND BENEFITS. WE'VE ALREADY SEEN THIS EMERGE AS A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN REDUCED RE-ENLISTMENT STATISTICS. IT'S CRITICAL THAT WE PRESERVE A QUALITY OF PROFESSIONAL LIFE FOR OUR MAINTAINERS AND NOT SACRIFICE IT TO MEET OUTSOURCING TARGETS.

SO, WHY IS IT CRITICAL? BECAUSE THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THAT THE NEXT TIME WE NEED THEM--REALLY NEED THEM--THE CIRCUMSTANCES WILL BE NEAT AND CLEAN AND SHORT. WE NEED THEM AS PART OF OUR COMBAT FORCES. WE NEED THEM READY TO GO--NOT READY TO HAVE A CONTRACT CHANGE--AND WE NEED THEM TO DO WHATEVER TASK IS NEEDED IN THE THEATER--NOT JUST WHAT THEY ARE ON CONTRACT FOR!